last two years were as under :

Year	Train No.	Daily Average Wait listed Passengers		
		2AC	FC/3AC	SL
1995	5621 N.E. Express	6	4	56
	5622 N.E. Express	9	5	24
	4055 Brahmaputra Mail	3	4	35
	4056 Brahmaputra Mail	2	1	145
1996	5621 N.E. Express	8	5	60
	5622 N.E. Express	3	1	21
	4055 Brahmaputra Mail	4	3	46
	4056 Brahmaputra Mail	5	5	149

(c) A weekly Rajdhani Express was introduced between New Delhi and Guwahati in July'94 which has been made tri-weekly from 26.1.96.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Load of the existing services is augmented as and when found feasible to clear the extra rush.

Programme Staff of Doordarshan and AIR

4039. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE :
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(A) whether the programme staff of All India Radio and Doordarshan undertook fast in December, 1996 and submitted a charter of demands;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the nature of their demands;

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(e) whether some of the demands have been considered so far; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Programme Staff Association of AIR and Doordarshan undertook indefinite hunger strike with effect from 5.12.1996. The hunger strike was later withdrawn.

(c) The demands pertain to various administrative matters like revision of pay, filling up of vacant posts, creation of posts, etc.

(d) and (e) The Government have already initiated necessary action in this regard.

(f) Does not arise.

Construction of Subway at Old Faridabad Railway Station

4040. CHAUDHARY RAMACHANDRA BENDA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware the long pending demand for the construction of one subway near Cabin No. 37 of old Faridabad (Haryana) railway station;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to construct subway at above place; and

(c) the time by which the above subway is likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No firm proposal with proposed location, site plan and other relevant details has been received from the appropriate State Authority.

(c) Does not arise.

Optic Fibre Lines

4041. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the steps being taken to enter into the stage of of the 'state-of-the-art' telecommunications;

(b) whether it is possible to by pass the copper-wire era and avail of the facilities offered by the wireless and satellite technologies;

(c) if so, the progress made in this direction;

(d) the expenditure has been incurred during the last three years on laying the optic-fibre lines; and

(e) whether it is justified in the context of the satellite technology?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) The following steps are being taken :-

(1) Digitalisation of the Network.

(2) Introduction of advanced technology equipment in transmission like optical fibre and Synchronous Digital Hierarchy (SDH).

(3) Advanced technology in subscriber access like wireless in local access, fibre in local loop.

(4) Introduction of cellular mobile services, V-SAT networks, Mobile Satellite services.

(b) The wireless and satellite technologies compliment and supplement the copper wire technology.

(c) Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) is working on Wireless Local Loop (WLL) and also on Mobile Satellite Service (MSS). Both of these will be

available in this year.

(d) 1993-94 - Rs. 417.00 crores
1994-95 - Rs. 479.00 crores
1995-96 - Rs. 575.00 crores

(e) Yes, Sir.

Construction of air strip at Darjeeling

4042. SHRI R.B. RAI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether an air-strip is under construction at Rungbull district in Darjeeling Hills;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the construction work is being executed by the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council;

(c) whether the Government have approved this project and allotted funds for the same; and

(d) if so, the amount allotted and released so far?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Gauge Conversion

4043. SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the gauge conversion work of Hassan-Mangalore railway line is going on as per schedule;

(b) if so, the total funds earmarked for this work and the time by which the above work is likely to be completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons for not completing the work within the scheduled time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir. Hassan-Sakleshpur will be completed by September'97 and the rest of the line by December'98.

(b) The cost of the project is Rs. 185 crore of the which Rs. 64.08 crore is likely to be spent by 31.03.97. Rs. 24.00 crore has been provided in 97-98.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Halt of Trains at Mankapur Junction

4044. SHRIMATI KETAKI DEVI SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that Mankapur is a big Junction in Uttar Pradesh and a big telephone factory is also there but inspite of it, no important train has its halt there due to which the residents of Mankapur have to face great inconvenience;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to provide halt of some trains (such as Vaishali Express and Amrapali Express) at Mankapur Junction keeping in view the constant inflow of passengers there;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) 11 trains in one direction and 12 in the other are presently stopping at Mankapur Junction providing direct service from Mankapur to Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Cochin, Hyderabad, Guwahati, Lucknow, Barauni, etc.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Not found justified.

Stoppage to Express Trains at Bilha Nagar Railway Station

4045. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHLE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposed to provide stoppage to Sarnath Express, Ahmedabad-Howrah Express and Link Express at Bilha Nagar (Bilaspur) Railway Station in Madhya Pradesh for the benefit of the citizens;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the income accrued by the Government from the said Railway Station during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

[English]

Opening of New Divisions

4046. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JAVIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals for opening new Divisions in Western Railway received by the Government, Division-wise;

(b) the number of proposals out of them accepted, Division-wise; and

(c) the criteria adopted in acceptance of these proposals?